

James H. Hagerty, Press Secretary to the President

I would oppose any repetition of these or similar provisions in subsequent legislation.

In another part of the bill, the Congress has constructively endeavored to encourage the States to regulate advertising along the Interstate System. This provision of the bill should be clarified and strengthened so as to provide a clearer basis for administrative standards. Certain exceptions which might permit advertising to go unchecked in some areas should be removed. Moreover, the act provides that incentive payments to encourage the States to regulate advertising shall be furnished from general tax revenues rather than from highway user tax revenues which constitute the Highway Trust Fund. This is inappropriate and should be corrected by subsequent legislation.

It will be necessary for the Congress in its next session to return to the subject of highway legislation in order to provide funds for the enlarged Federal assistance under this Act. Its action at that time should accord with the sound principles that established the Trust Fund as a means for keeping federal-aid highway expenditures on a self-sustaining basis.

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Important progress has been made in the development of an improved and enlarged highway system under the Highway Act of 1956. Under that Act and related legislation, Federal expenditures for public roads will approximate \$3 billion dollars in fiscal year 1957. This is over half a billion dollars more than in the present fiscal year and two and one-half times as much as in fiscal year 1957.

The expansion and improvement of our roads and highways have been major factors in the development of our economy and will continue to be so in the years ahead. Nevertheless, the defects to which I refer seem to me to be so serious that I am constrained to invite special attention to them; the hope they will be completely eliminated in future legislation.

The first and most important of these defects is the violation of the long established principle of a 50-50 sharing of Federal and State costs of federal-aid highway programs other than the Interstate System. H. R. 5551, applicable to the added program authorized for this year, a two to one ratio for this long established principle. I deplore the possibility that some may try to use this departure from a sound arrangement as a precedent for similar action. This I would resist.

The second defect is the provision for Federal advances to State governments in finance more of their one-third share of the cost of the additional primary, secondary and urban highway construction authorized by this legislation. Here again we would create a damaging precedent for the future.

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